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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fourteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

The Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations and has the honour to inform it that the Government of Angola has decided to present its candidacy to the Human Rights Council for the term 2010-2013 at the elections to be held on 13 May 2010 by the General Assembly.

In this regard, please find enclosed herewith, in support of Angola's candidacy, the voluntary pledges and commitments of Angola in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 5 May 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

Angola's candidacy to the United Nations Human Rights Council (2010-2013)

Angola's voluntary pledges and commitments for the promotion and protection of human rights

I. Introduction

Angola has decided to present its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2010-2013 (election to be held on 13 May 2010).

Through its resolution 60/251, the General Assembly established the Human Rights Council, creating a historic opportunity to improve the effectiveness and strengthen the human rights protection system within the United Nations.

As a result of the experience lived during different periods of its history, the Republic of Angola began a new cycle in 2010, characterized primarily by the adoption of a new constitution that:

- Marks the end of the transition period and finally establishes a democratic State of law
- Is more comprehensive and recognizes as inalienable the rights and freedoms enshrined therein
- Creates the political, economic, social, cultural, and peace and stability conditions that ensure a greater institutional capacity for the promotion, observance and protection of human rights

II. Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

In addition to the broader scope of the Constitution the Republic of Angola recently adopted, it is important to stress the organs that make up its institutional framework, namely:

- The Secretary of State for Human Rights
- The Courts
- The Attorney General of the Republic
- The Ombudsman
- The Provincial Committees for Human Rights, the National Council on Families
- The Children's National Institute and the National Council for Children
- The Family Counselling Centres and the Networks for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children
- The Intersectoral Reporting Commission on Human Rights

III. Commitments of the Republic of Angola

The national reconstruction efforts and the implementation of the poverty eradication strategy in general aim to improve the human development index, especially those indicators related to human rights, the dignity of the people and their welfare.

Today, the Human Rights Council is a revitalized body that, unlike before, views the promotion and protection of human rights from a global and depoliticized perspective and has the deepening of the cooperation among the States as its main pillar.

Therefore, in terms of the organization and functioning of the Council, the Government of the Republic of Angola will continue to:

- Strengthen the working methods of the Human Rights Council
- Intensify international cooperation under the terms of resolution 60/251 of the General Assembly, highlighting the importance of the Universal Periodic Review and the Mechanism of Procedures of the Council
- Revise the Council agenda in order to avoid duplication and dispersion of material, financial and human resources

At the international, regional and subregional levels, the Government of Angola will remain committed and will continue to support and encourage the following:

- A constructive dialogue and cooperation among members and non-members of the Council
- Mainstreaming of human rights into the United Nations system to enhance the coordination of its activities and the effectiveness of the United Nations human rights machinery
- The engagement of non-governmental organizations as a positive and important element of dialogue in the work of the Council
- The universality and indivisibility of all human rights, as well as civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development
- A regional and international process that seeks to advance the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms
- An effective response to human rights crises when they occur, guided by universality, impartiality, objectivity and non-selectivity, while promoting international dialogue and cooperation

Angola will continue promoting legislative measures in order to better harmonize its domestic legal framework with its international obligations in the field of human rights. Thus, at the internal level, the Republic of Angola will continue accelerating the process of signing the following international instruments:

- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol
- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking, Especially Women and Children
- The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

In the near future, the Republic of Angola will initiate a process towards the ratification of all major human rights international instruments it signed, such as:

- The International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries
- The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights

In compliance with Angola's pledge for its election to the Human Rights Council in 2007, the following actions have been undertaken, inter alia:

- Adoption of a new Constitution inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- Signature of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights
- Presentation of a national report under the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism
- Creation of the post of Secretary of State for Human Rights
- Welcoming of visits by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and by the President of the Working Group on arbitrary detentions
- Passing of a new law on political parties, which allowed for the increase in the participation of women in politics, in particular in Parliament, putting Angola among the 10 countries with the highest female representation in Parliament, with 39 per cent
- Creation of a Cross-Sectoral Committee on Trafficking in Persons

In regard to institutional relations with United Nations bodies, the Republic of Angola also reiterates, in particular, its commitment to:

- Deepening the already excellent relations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the mechanism of procedures of the Human Rights Council
- Submitting its periodic reports to the human rights treaties body

- Considering implementing all recommendations contained in the UPR report
- Fully cooperating with international human rights mechanisms and other relevant United Nations agencies and stakeholders
- Engaging actively and constructively with the Human Rights Council, which is of key importance to strengthen the institutional capacity to promote and protect human rights